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Letter from Charles Elliott to James B. Finley

Charles Elliott

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Rev. James B. Finley
Columbus
Ohio

Post Office
about 1848

Cincinnati O. March, 9th 1848

Dear bro. Finley

I laid the matter of your book before the agents and they requested ^{me} to inform you, ~~as follows~~. "They think well of the work and are favorably disposed towards its publication by the concern. But the General Conference is now so near at hand, that they do not feel at liberty to enter into a contract for a book which could not be issued in their term. They have, for this reason, declined an offer from bro Wiley, of a work which he had prepared. Besides the agents could not contract without the ~~approval~~ ^{approval} of the editors, and bro. Left will hardly have time from other duties to examine the work before general conference. There can be little doubt but the work will be taken by the concern on favorable terms." Such is the substance of what they say.

I conversed with bro. Left on the subject, and he is very favorable to the publication of the book, as well as myself. But probably you would not be prepared to present it before general conference, at any rate no time need be lost by you in ~~preparing~~ completing the preparation, and I suppose it could be attended to without any loss of time in your through the examination and such corrections as would be called for. So all things are favorable in the matter.

I procured for you one of the pamphlets (164 pages octavo) containing the decision of the Mayville case, and put it into the hands of one of our clerks to forward to you the first opportunity of hand, but if such opportunity does not offer in one or two or three days, then to send it by mail; as I think you should have it without delay. I want you to examine it carefully, and write your views and send it to me for publication. This is one of the most dangerous assaults ever made on the M. & Church, as it sets her of her very existence, and puts in her place an entity, the M. & Ch. South, and a non-entity, the M. & Ch. North.

It is important for you to enter on this matter, as I will have as much to do as I can, besides what you can do in this matter, as you will see from what follows, and what the signs of the times will indicate to you.

I have now an article prepared on the property question, presenting the history of this question down to the present, with observations. And I feel it my duty to follow up this with several articles on other matters, especially showing that the Gen. Conf. did not divide or authorize the division of the church, with conciliatory hints.

You see that Dr. Bond argues for a division of the Back Concern, both capital and proceeds. My articles will be without direct opposition to him yet maintaining some principles different from his. I entertain great fears, that his plan will be such as will not mark; and the grounds on which he wants to divide, as contained in his paper. I think, — some of them, are very faulty. But my cause is already fixed; and if Dr. Bond will give us something better, I will rejoice. But I have my fears; and purpose not to be in formal antagonism with him, yet presenting my views. If he can devise a constitutional and safe way of dividing the funds, the capital of the Back Concern and Chartered funds, he will do more than I think he can do. Time will tell. I express these fears to you, and hope for the better.

I will propose in the paper the time of setting out for Pittsburgh. I had been calculating to set out about the 18th or 20th. To take my wife to her father before the conference. But perhaps I had best wait so that we may be all together, and that we may have the privilege of conferring. If you think it of any importance for me to wait, let me know, and I will wait, as my wife can go along with me, and can go to

see her father and return without inconvenience, before the session will be ended. It would be important, were the delegates of Ohio, Ia. Illinois, and Iowa to meet in Cincinnati, and go on in time to confer with brethren in Pittsburgh the Friday and Saturday before the conference commences. Boats are starting every day. I will make all the enquiries about the boats, and arrange the best I can. By all means come this way. This will be important on many accounts. You will be amazed when you read the decision of the Maysville case. I was punished enough to keep in moderate temper. There was Bascom standing out prominent; and reminded me of the dangerous men to let go. And then Hunter prepares to make his daily, ~~catching~~ and more before they are well uttered. Bought me not go into private executive session for the first week, and cut up the first week of the Pittsburgh daily, which must go to the south, with Hunter's comments. This is too bad. Write soon.

I enclose thirteen dollars for Hopkinton gun.
Rev. J. B. Finley. Yours in Christ
C. Elliott